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McCone Has Passion For CIA Anonymity

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JOHAN A. MCCONE, the new director of the Central Intelligence Agency, will appear before the Senate Armed Services Committee Thursday for his confirmation hearing, an appearance expected to produce an exposition of his views about the super-secret agency. McCone, just turned 80, has only now begun to get a grip on the huge intelligence organization although he was named to the post last September and was sworn in Nov. 29. A major reason for the delay was the recent death of his wife after a brief illness.

But there is no doubt that McCone will be the boss of the shop. He already has persuaded the deputy director, Air Force Gen. C. P. Cabell, to resign as of Jan. 31 after nine years in the No. 2 spot. McCone has asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff for recommendations on a successor and he has made it plain he wants the most competent man available, not a dud the military would like to sidetrack.

The law says that if the CIA chief is a military man, the deputy must be a civilian. It does not put it the other way round, but McCone feels that was the intent of Congress, especially since the CIA is so deeply involved in military intelligence.

Cuba Boss Retained

HE HAS ASKED the two top deputies, Robert Amory for overt intelligence and Richard Bissell for covert activities, to stay on. Bissell, the CIA boss of the ill-fated Cuban fiasco last spring, had expected to leave and top officials in the Pentagon had been angling for his services there. But McCone is inclined to believe that the system more than Bissell was to blame for the debacle.

Bissell always has had a high rating in important Government circles and now he will get a second chance. But there are not going to be any more Cubes as far as the CIA is concerned, if both President Kennedy and McCone have their way.

A great deal has been printed about the post-Cuba CIA probe by Attorney General Robert Kennedy, former Chief of Naval Operations Arleigh Burke, Allen Dulles and Gen. Maxwell Taylor, Mr. Kennedy's military adviser. The fact is that that investigation has produced no written changes in CIA's order

Rather, the President and McCone, on the advice of the investigators, have decided that the agency should revert to its original scope of activities. This means two things at least.

First, the agency will undertake no large-scale operations which cannot be kept clandestine. This rules out a Cuba-style affair. Second, there will be more attention to the overt intelligence

activities under Amory's command. Beyond this, the details are not likely to be spread on the record.

Damper on Speeches

MCCONE, HOWEVER, is anxious to improve the image of the CIA. He is aware that it always will be cited by the Communists as responsible for any sort of mischief Moscow and Peking dislike. Sometimes this will be true, and that includes some of the captured spy charges. But McCone thinks that the agency can become more anonymous even though it is impossible to hide its shiny new multi-million dollar headquarters across the Potomac.

Some of his philosophy, including a feeling that, unlike his predecessor Allen Dulles, he should avoid public speeches, is likely to be contained in his statement at the confirmation hearing this week.

Washington is generally aware that under Dulles the CIA became a sort of super government. When the late John Foster Dulles was Secretary of State and his brother was boss of the CIA, they more than once agreed on some CIA activity, obtained President Eisenhower's approval and then told no one else but the agents involved. The embarrassment to other Government officials in the State and Defense Departments was sometimes intense.

After Secretary Dulles' death, his successor, Christian A. Herter, worked out an agreement with Allen Dulles which, on paper, at least, firmly put CIA personnel in any given country under control of the American ambassador there. This was reaffirmed between Secretary Dean Rusk and Allen Dulles and lately between Rusk and McCone.

Admittedly, this is easier to say than to accomplish. McCone has been dealing with a number of individual ambassadors to make it work. A great deal depends on the ambassadors. Some want to know everything; some think the whole business is too dirty to know about; most want to know in general what the agency is up to but to stop short of knowing the details.

Under Taylor's Eye

THE CIA, TOO, is now coming under more scrutiny from other elements of government. First of all, Gen. Taylor is reported to be spending a good deal of his time keeping an eye on the CIA on behalf of the President. Second, an interdepartmental committee with top representation from Defense and State has become more active than before.

McCone, like Dulles, believes that the CIA's function is to gather intelligence, not to produce policies based on what it learns. The Cuban fiasco at least in part was a result of mixing the two.

In that case, it appears, the agency suffered from over compartmentalization, something vital to security but dangerous as well. The new CIA boss expects to exert policy influence through presentation of intelligence rather than by recommendation for action.

That McCone is going to be a tough boss is evident. His record both in business and as head of the Atomic Energy Commission under President Eisenhower is full of evidence that he is a strong-minded and strong-willed executive. He runs to thoroughness and precision.

So far, he has found, both in Washington and on visits to Europe and the Far East, that the agency has a better group of people than he might have thought before he took the job. This is not to deny that some weeding out along the line may be in prospect. The agency went through a heavy case of letters after the Cuban fiasco put the



John A. McCone seeks a better image for the CIA.

spotlight on it, but even now seems to have returned.

McCone is very aware of the criticisms of his appointment, chiefly on the ground that he is so violently anti-Communist that he might lack balance and sophisticated discrimination in the sensitive intelligence job. If that is so, there is no evidence of it yet, according to the word along the CIA grapevine.

It is probable that McCone will differ with others in the Administration on such things as Soviet motivations. But the indications are that his and the President's views of the Communist bloc and how to deal with it are rather closely in line. McCone believes in the implacable hostility of the Communists toward the United States but he sees no evidence that they are constructing a first-strike nuclear capability.

He is fully aware of the dangers of direct confrontation between the two super powers and he is aware of the advantages of exerting pressures on